

hope, faith, life, love

University of Alberta Graduate Recital Choir & Orchestra



Melanie Marlin, conductor
Denis Arseneau, piano

Featuring works by:

Ramona Luengen, Vaughan Williams, Bruckner,
Handel, Monteverdi & Whitacre

Convocation Hall

Arts Building

University of Alberta

plus the premiere performance of
selected Emily Dickinson poetry
set by Canadian composers

November 5, 2008 8pm

FREE ADMISSION



DEPARTMENT OF
MUSIC
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Programme

With Cheerful Notes

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

(from *Chandos Anthem no.9*)

Deborah Chang, violin

Alexandra Campbell, violin

Matt Jaffrey, oboe

Denis Arseneau, organ

Three Monteverdi Madrigals

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

Amor, per tua mercé, vattene a quella

Sfogava con le stelle

Io mi son giovinetta

Shelley Roth, Mary-Ellen Rayner, Abra Whitney, Douglas Jahns, Jacques Arsenault, soli quintet

Two Settings of Emily Dickinson

Yellow Hue

Benjamin Duinker (b.1983)

To Make A Prairie

Steven Bendick (b.1984)

Os Justi

Anton Bruckner (1824-1896)

INTERMISSION

Two Settings of Rainer Maria Rilke

Ramona Luengen (b.1960)

Mésange

Frühlingslied

Shelley Roth, Abra Whitney, Douglas Jahns, soli trio

Five Mystical Songs

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Christopher Giffen, baritone soloist

hope, faith, life, love

Eric Whitacre (b.1970)

Notes:

Singing is often used as a tool to express extreme emotion, be it joy, sorrow or fury. As a result, many composers seek to set texts that convey the heights of these emotions, whether the source is sacred, poetic or otherwise. I am drawn to these texts that identify with human emotion, but will confess that I initially chose several of this evening's pieces due to this interest alone, without considering their relationship to one another, and later struggled with presenting such breadth of context within one evening's programme. Although the texts are engaging enough to speak for themselves, the origins and contexts of the works will hopefully serve to further reveal the relationships between them.

Handel wrote the Chandos Anthems while he held the position of composer-in-residence to the Duke of Chandos, and selected the uniformly hopeful texts from Psalms himself. This precedes by only months the impending declaration of war by France and England against Spain.

The madrigals of Monteverdi were written at the turn of the 17th century, a time when the spiritual values of the Renaissance were giving way to the earthly values of the Baroque age. The settings use poetry from his contemporaries that overtly and lavishly describe love, loss and the human condition, yet like Handel, were composed under conditions of court employment, a more functional origin than the texts might imply.

The text of *Os justi* also comes from the Psalms. This setting is dedicated to Ignaz Traumihler, a former teacher and colleague of Bruckner. Traumihler sought to bring the expressive simplicity of Palestrina's choral style to 19th century Austria. With this aim, Bruckner achieves remarkable expressive effects in this modal setting without using a single accidental.

The rest of this evening's programme features 20th century works. The poetry set by these composers spans from 17th century Welsh priest George Herbert to more widely known poets such as Rainer Maria Rilke, Emily Dickinson and e.e.cummings, who may share space in modern poetry compilations but retain sharply contrasting styles and backgrounds.

The power that these poets share is the ability to use language in a way with which we continue to identify today, even though the worlds in which they have lived and created were in many ways different from ours. Composer Eric Whitacre, using e.e. cummings' words, writes the final selection and title work of this evening's programme. I have chosen this theme because these four elements capture humankind's most basic impulses. They form the driving force of our days, our energies, and our relationships. Simply put, it seems that all music, all emotions, and all experiences originate in some way from these four small words. And so I offer this evening of music to you as a way of hearing through our voices what these ideas mean in *your* mind and heart.

- Melanie

Text & Translations

With cheerful notes let all the earth

from Chandos Anthem, no.9 – G.F. Handel

(text from Psalm 117:1,2)

With cheerful notes let all the earth to heav'n their voices raise.

Let all inspir'd with godly mirth sing solemn hymns with praise.

Amor, per tua mercé, vattene a quella – C. Monteverdi

(G.M. Bonardo)

Amor, per tua mercé, vattene a quella

che m'è così rubella,

e con una saetta

passale il cor e fa' di me vendetta.

Dilli: "Come potete unqua patire

chi tanto v'ama far, donna, morire?"

Love, I ask for your mercy, for you to attack she who I find so beautiful,

and let my revenge be made with one thunderbolt passed through her heart.

Say to her: "How can you leave the one who loves you, woman, as if leaving him to die?"

*English translations of *Sfogava con le stelle* and *Io mi son giovinetta*

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Sfoga con le stelle — C. Monteverdi

(O. Rinuccini)

Sfoga con le stelle un'infermo d'amore sotto notturno ciel il suo dolore.

E dicea fisso in loro: "O imagini belle del' idol mio ch'adoro,

si com' a me mostrate mentre così splendete la sua rara beltate, così mostrast' a lei

i vivi ardori miei; la fareste col vostr' aureo sembiante pietosa si come me fat' amante."

Beneath a sky-wide silence, when like a priest the dark has closed the evening's dying eyes, and the world lies still and cold within its night, a young man, sick with love, tilting his heart's small cup, pours out his sorrow to the stars. Gazing up he cries: "Distant lights, images of the idol I adore, whose beauty brings each dusk a thousand souls rushing soundlessly through corridors to stare astonished from the floors of Heaven, call softly to her through these quiet seas, so looking up she too may glimpse the fires of paradise, and seeing how I burn, cup her hands and bathe my love with tears.

Io mi son giovinetta — C. Monteverdi

(B. Guarini)

"Io mi son giovinetta e rido e canto alla stagion novella" cantava la mia dolce pastorella, quando

subitamente a quel canto il cor mio canto, quasi augellin vago e ridente: "Son giovinett' anch'io e

rido e canto alla gentil e bella primavera d'Amore che ne' begl' occhi tuoi fiorisce."

Ed ella fuggi, se saggio sei, disse, l'ardore fuggi ch' in questi rai primavera per te non sarà mai.

"I am a young girl who laughs and sings, for I am soon to be the bride of spring!" So sang my love, and straightaway my heart thrilled into a wren, wings quivering: "I too am young, and in these still bare woods my anthems praise, with tinkling bluebells and toy-trumpetings of daffodils, the buds of love that blossom in your eyes!" But even as it sang I saw inside her something die, and where a warmth had been there was a winter. "If you are wise, she cried, run from these flames, let their ash grow cold; for in these eyes the love that you have seen flowers not for you, but for another."

Os Justi — Bruckner
(text from Psalm 37:30,31)

Os justi meditabitur sapientiam,
et lingua ejus loquetur judicium.
Lex Dei ejus in corde ipsius:
et non supplantabuntur gressus ejus. Alleluja.

*The mouth of the righteous shall meditate wisdom,
and his tongue shall speak justice.
The Law of his God is in his heart,
and his steps shall not falter. Hallelujah*

Two Settings of Emily Dickinson

Yellow Hue — Ben Duinker

Nature rarer uses yellow than any other hue;
Saves she all that for sunsets, - Prodigal of blue.

Spending scarlet like a woman, yellow she affords
Only scantily and selectly, like a lover's words.

To Make A Prairie — Steven Bendick

To make a prairie it takes a clover and one bee, -
One clover, and a bee, and revery.
A revery alone will do
If bees are few.

Two Settings of Rainer Maria Rilke

Mésange (from *Poèmes et Dédicaces*.)

Ô toi, petit coeur, qui hivernes avec nous au milieu des rigueurs, tu te poses -tendre lanterne de
vie- sur les arbres en pleurs; je contemple ce feu qui t'allume a travers ton plumage dru,
et moi, plus cache a la brume, je ne crains de m'eteindre non plus.

A-t-elle peur de demain cette neige? En effet, elle durcit en vain;
mais nous, qu'une flamme protege, nous aurons la joie de demain.

*O you, small heart that winters out these bitter winter days with us
-tender lantern of life- you perch on the weeping trees; I reflect on the fire shining through your
thick-set feathers, and I, more hidden by the mist, I am not afraid to burn out, either.*

*Does this snow fear tomorrow? In fact, it hardens in vain;
But we, protected by a flame, we will know the pleasure of tomorrow.* -Translation by A. Poulin, Jr.

Frühlingslied (from *The Sonnets to Orpheus*)

Frühling ist wiedergekommen. Die Erde ist wie ein Kind, das Gedichte weiß; viele, o viele ... Für die
Beschwerde langen Lernens bekommt sie den Preis. Streng war ihr Lehrer. Wir mochten das Weiße
an dem Barte des alten Manns. Nun, wie das Grüne, das Blaue heiße, dürfen wir fragen: sie kanns,
sie kanns!

Erde, die frei hat, du glückliche, spiele nun mit den Kindern. Wir wollen dich fangen, fröhliche Erde.
Dem Frohsten gelingt's. O, was der Lehrer sie lehrte, das Viele, und was gedruckt steht in Wurzeln
und langen schwierigen Stämmen: sie singts, sie singts!

*Spring has come back. And the Earth is like a child who memorized many poems, so many! ... For this
long hard study, she wins the prize. Her teacher was tough. We liked the white hue of the beard
below the old man's nose. Now, we can quiz her what the blue and green are called: she knows, she
knows!*

*You lucky earth, from duty freed, play with the children. We want to hold on to you, jolly earth. The
jolliest succeed. What teacher taught her, all those things, and what stands written in roots and
long entangled stems: she sings, she sings!* -Translation by H. Landman

Five Mystical Songs — R. Vaughan Williams
(George Herbert, from *The Temple*.)

I.

Rise heart; thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise without delays,
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise with him may'st rise;
That, as his death calcined thee to dust, His life may make thee gold, and much more. Just.

Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part with all thy art.
The cross taught all wood to resound his name who bore the same.
His stretched sinews taught all strings, what key is best to celebrate this most high day.

Consort both heart and lute, and twist a song pleasant and long:
Or since all music is but three parts vied, and multiplied;
O let thy blessed Spirit bear a part, and make up our defects with his sweet art.

II.

I got me flowers to strew thy way; I got me boughs off many a tree:
But thou was't up by break of day, and brought'st thy sweets along with thee.

The Sun arising in the East, though he give light, and the East perfume;
If they should offer to contest with thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this, though many suns to shine endeavour?
We count three hundred, but we miss: There is but one, and that one ever.

III.

Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back, guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-ey'd Love, observing me grow slack from my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning, If I lack'd anything.

"A guest", I answer'd, "worthy to be here:" Love said, "You shall be he." "I the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear, I cannot look on thee." Love took my hand, and smiling did reply, "who made the eyes but I?"

"Truth, Lord, but I have marr'd them: let my shame go where it doth deserve."

"And know you not," says Love, "who bore the blame?" "My dear, then I will serve."

"You must sit down," says Love, "and taste my meat." So I did sit and eat.

IV.

Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life: Such a Way, as gives us breath:

Such a Truth, as ends all strife: Such a Life, as killeth death.

Come, my Light, my Feast, my Strength: Such a Light, as shows a feast:

Such a Feast, as mends in length: Such a Strength, as makes his guest.

Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart: Such a Joy, as none can move:

Such a Love, as none can part: Such a Heart, as joys in love.

V.

Let all the world in every corner sing, My God and King!

The heavens are not too high, His praise may thither fly:

The earth is not too low, His praises there may grow.

The Church with Psalms must shout. No door can keep them out:

But above all, the heart must bear the longest part.

Let all the world in every corner sing, My God and King!

faith, hope, life, love - Eric Whitacre

(text extracted from e.e. cummings' *!hope*)

faith, hope, life, love, dream, joy, truth, soul...

Graduate Recital Choir

Soprano

Andi Eng
Amy Gartner
Meghan Rayment
Mary-Ellen Rayner
Shelley Roth
Sarah Toane

Alto

Ruth Brodersen
Maria Conkey
Lana Cuthbertson
Susan Farrell
Elaine Vooy
Abra Whitney

Tenor

Tristan C. Thompson
Adam Ferland
Douglas Jahns
Douglas Laver
Gord Oaks
Jarett Prouse
Sten Thomson

Bass

Jacques Arsenault
Christopher Giffen
Kurt Illerbrun
Damon MacLeod
Jaron Van Dijken
Anthony Wynne

Graduate Recital Orchestra

Violin I

Deborah Chang*
Amanda Alstad
Benjamin Cheung

Violin II

Alexandra Campbell
Miriam Herbold
Marie Krejcar

Viola

Julia Hui
Haley Wolgien

Cello

Julian Savaryn
Kathleen de Caen

Bass

Roxanne Nesbitt

Piano

Denis Arseneau

*concertmaster

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Today and always, I am incredibly grateful to my parents for their unfailing ability to see the best in me. Thank you for providing an environment that inspires thought, growth and love.



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